

Sighting of Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* (Linnaeus, 1758) in Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary: An addition to the birds of Odisha

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The distributional range of Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* (Linnaeus 1758) spreads across Africa, Europe, Russia, Gulf country, China, Japan and Indian subcontinent (BirdLife International 2009). It is known to breed in South Africa, Spain, Russia and Eastern Europe. The bird is a winter visitor to west Pakistan, north India from Baluchistan, Sind, North West Frontier Province and Punjab through Nepal and the Gangetic plain to eastern Assam, south through Rajasthan to about Kutch and northern Gujarat (Ali and Ripley 1987). Though the bird occurs widely there are sporadic records from India (Andheria 2001). The present note gives the first confirmed sighting record of the species in Odisha.

During our avifaunal survey in Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary, we encountered Black Storks at Mali Sahi area, in the central part of the sanctuary. On 13 March 2010, at 8:30 AM, we sighted and photographed a pair of stork species, foraging on the side of the stream bank (Fig. 1). The birds were identified by the presence of white under parts, black neck and under wing with distinct red bill and legs following Grimmett *et al.* (2009). The species is known to inhabit shallow

streams, pools, marshes and dry river beds (Ali and Ripley 1987).

Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary (20°31' 37" to 20°45'37"N and 84°43' 03" to 85°05'17" E) falls under Nayagarh district, encompasses an area of 163 km² and is one of the major biodiversity conservation areas; which is also considered as the gateway of Eastern Ghats. It is contiguous with the Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary and comes under Satkosia Tiger Reserve. The vegetation of the Sanctuary largely comprises of Northern tropical moist deciduous and dry deciduous forests and moist peninsular low level Sal.

As per the literature available, the distribution of Black Stork was not included in the bird list of Odisha (Mishra *et al.* 1996). This record appears to be the first for Odisha. We sincerely appeal to all birdwatchers of Odisha to keep a close watch on the movements of the Black Stork and provide additional information about its distributional status in Odisha.

References

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Figure 1. Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*. Photo Himashu S. Palei